The Capitol Hill Monitor

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A VISIT TO A JAPANESE KOBAN (POLICE BOX)

by Mike McKeehan

(Editor's Note: Like most non-English speaking nations, Japan has a centralized national police force, rather than the large number of independent, decentralized police forces typical in the United States, for example. WMH).

Last fall I went to Japan on business, and before I left I called the Japanese embassy downtown to ask about arranging a visit with the police in Tokyo while I was there. The National Police Agency (NPA) has representatives in the embassy and they very graciously set up my visit. On the appointed day, my host met me at my hotel in downtown Tokyo and we took a cab to NPA HQ. There I got a background briefing from the Deputy Director of the International Liaison Division of the NPA.

All NPA officers receive the same basic training. They then go to specialized training (investigations, bomb squad, highway patrol, etc.) and are assigned to one of the 47 prefectures police departments. (A prefecture is the adminstrative sub-division into which Japan is divided). Officers tend to stay in one prefecture for their entire careers, although fast-trackers may pull a stint in the Tokyo headquarters before returning to a command assignment in their prefecture.

Here in the United States the latest fad in law enforcement management is "community policing"; just about all departments claim to be doing some form of it, even if they all can't agree on just what community policing is. Well, Japan has had community policing since the end of World War II, based on the koban (police box) concept.

After the background presentation at HQ, my host and I then walked a few blocks to a typical koban. In the cities, a koban can range from a phone booth-sized "police box" to a small, usually two-story, building with two or three rooms, a kitchen and a bathroom, where officers are based for their eight-hour shift. Usually two to four officers work out of the koban depending on the location and time of the shift. They walk beats consisting of a few square blocks. At the larger kobans the officers can eat their meals and also hold small neighborhood meetings. In rural areas and small towns, an officer will live in the koban with his family, with his wife doing double duty as homemaker and telephone call-taker.

Because they are never too far from the koban (more than 15,000 exist in Japan, with more than 1,200 just in Tokyo), officers have little need to carry radios. In fact, the only clue that radios are used at all were what appeared to be VHF high whips on the small Highway Patrol utility/crash trucks. I understand patrol officers sometimes carry analog VHF hand-held radios, while patrol cars in larger cities are equipped with digital voice radios and mobile data terminals. The Security Police (dignitary protection) also carry digital hand-held radios. However, at no time during my visit did I see a portable radio; even in the NPA headquarters building!

Kobans typically have only a phone and fax machine. No computerized high-tech anywhere, which I found surprising for a country with so much high-tech manufacturing capability. If you watched any of the coverage of the recent subway gas attack in Tokyo you may have noticed you never saw any footage of a police officer talking on the radio, as we so often see in coverage of U.S. police incidents.

One koban function that cries out for automation, in my opinion, is the maintaining of the three-by-five card file that is kept in each koban with details about each home and business within the koban's service area. Much of the beat officers' time is spent keeping these cards up to date, which they do by walking around and interviewing people.

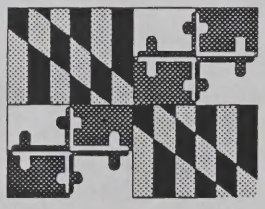
Because of the neighborhood orientation of the koban style of policing, when a crime is committed (typically bicycle thefts or vandalism), the beat officers generally are able to identify a suspect in a matter of minutes because they know who the bad guys are in that area. The main crime problems in Japan are hooligans (young punks on motorcycles and western tastes clashing with the old guard) and gun crimes. Handguns are not permitted in Japan, so smuggling in guns is big business for the Boryokudan (Japanese organized crime). Interestingly, private citizens are allowed to own shotguns for hunting purposes; these are registered with the prefecture police. (Edit. Note: Japan has one of the lowest crime rates in the world; violent crime is extremely unusual).

All in all, my impression of Japanese police communications is that the NPA officers are not as tied to the radio as their counterparts are here in the United States. The average small town patrol officer in the United States probably has more modern radio equipment than the typical Japanese koban officer. Larger service areas and higher rate of calls for service make technology a necessity for the U.S. police officer, whereas the hands-on approach seems to work for the Japanese.

As an aside, one night I went to the Akihabara district where they have a lot of electronics shops selling every kind of gadget under the sun, including scanners,

short-wave radios, and amateur hand-held radios. It was mostly older AOR, Sony, Icom, Kenwood, and Yaesu stuff, and the prices weren't that great. The yen-to-dollar exchange rate was not good then and has gotten worse. For example, a glass of orange juice in my hotel was $10, and if I wanted a slice of melon with my breakfast it would have cost me $25. A simple breakfast of croissant, tea, and oatmeal was $18. Thank goodness my company was paying!

Coming soon: High-tech surveillance in London.



INSIDE THE MARYLAND NATIONAL CAPITAL PARK AND PLANNING COMMISSION

The Maryland General Assembly established the Maryland-National Capital Park and Planning Commission in 1927. The commission reorganized in 1959 and, in 1975, its laws were recodified as Article 28 of the Annotated Code of Maryland.

The commission's primary mission is to prepare and administer planning and zoning within the "regional district". The regional district in Prince George's County encompasses all of the county with the exception of Laurel. In Montgomery County it includes the entire county except for Rockville, Gaithersburg and several smaller municipalities.

The commission is also empowered to acquire, develop, maintain and administer a regional system of parks. The operating and administrative functions of the commission are financed primarily by property taxes which are levied for the commission by the two counties.

Crime prevention, ensuring safety, security, and environmental protection of the commission's property, and safety for the park visitors are the responsibilities of the M-NCPPC Park Police Division.

M-NCPPC police have full police powers on, and within a mile of, all M-NCPPC property. This includes the majority of Montgomery and Prince George's Counties. Approximately 80 percent of Montgomery County, for example, falls within a mile of M-NCPPC property. M-NCPPC police have concurrent jurisdiction with the county police. Many M-NCPPC patrol cars also communicate on county police channels. On Montgomery County police channels the officers identify as "Park" units. On Prince George's County police channels they identify as "Maryland Park" or 800-series "Zebra" units. Radio codes used by each division are similar to those used by the respective counties.

The park police structure consists of two major divisions: Administration and Special Operations. Special Operations is divided into two sections: Support Services and the Mounted sections. Support Services Section includes the Investigative, Technical and Special services. Technical Services consists of the Communications and Records units.

The Communications Unit provides and coordinates the Park Police's radio, telephone and computer systems. The unit also coordinates emergency activities for the commission's administrative and maintenance radio system after normal working hours and on weekends and holidays.

Prince George's County Division

159.3150 r [114.8] F1: Police Dispatch (North)
159.3150 s [114.8] F2: Police F1 Talkaround
159.2700 r [103.5] F3: Police Dispatch (South)
159.2700 s [103.5] F4: Police F3 Talkaround
159.3900 r [141.3] F5: Park Rangers & Maintenance
159.3900 s [141.3] F6: F5 Talkaround
155.4750 s [None] F7: NLEEF
151.2800 r [118.8] F8: Montgomery County Division F1
151.3400 s [118.8] F9: Montgomery County Division F2
158.8650 s [141.3] Abandoned?; former F4
158.9400 s [None] Emergency Preparedness Coordination
158.9550 s [d205] USAir Arena Detail

Montgomery County Division

151.2800 r [118.8] F1: Police Dispatch
151.3400 s [118.8] F2: Maintenance and Police Tactical
151.2800 s [118.8] F3: Police F1 Talk-around
453.5500 r [100.0] Police Mutual Aid

Newer Montgomery County Division radios reportedly include selected channels used by Montgomery County fire as well as the Prince George's County Division. Can someone please provide the additional channels?

NEW REHOBOTH BEACH FIRE CHANNEL PLAN

The explosion of cross-band repeaters used by fire departments on the Delmarva peninsula has turned the traditional low-band channels into mere links between high-tech repeater systems. Since many

of the systems repeat several channels, local fire department frequencies often mix with distant signals and create a confusing collage of radio traffic. Call signs are almost meaningless since you never know for certain just who is repeating what. Fire departments from Milford to Ocean City have access to cross-band repeater channels belonging to neighboring departments, which only adds to the confusion.

To take advantage of the new repeater systems, the Rehoboth Beach fire department added 10 channels to the department's channel plan. Channels marked by an asterisk receive carrier squelch but transmit with the tone indicated. All other channels use the listed tone for transmit and receive.

New RB VFD Channel Plan

453.3000 r [023] F01: Reho 1; cross-repeats 33.78|
453.3000 s [023] F02: Reho 2; talkaround
453.2500 r [023] F03: Reho 3; operations
453.2500 s [023] F04: Reho 4; talkaround
453.6500 s [023] F05: Reho 5; tactical
453.6500 r [82.5] F06: Lewes; cross-repeats 33.96 *
453.6500 r [051] F07: Lewes; operations
453.6500 s [051] F08: Lewes; talkaround
460.6000 r [67.0] F09: Bethany; cross-repeats 33.96 *
460.5750 r [023] F10: Bethany 7; operations
460.6250 r [100.0] F11: Milford; operations
460.6250 r [107.2] F12: Milford; cross-repeats 33.78 *
460.6375 r [192.8] F13: Millsboro; operations *
462.9750 r [192.8] F14: Med 10; East Sussex Co EMS
460.7000 s [245] F15: AVC; talkaround
460.7000 r [245] F16: AVC; operations

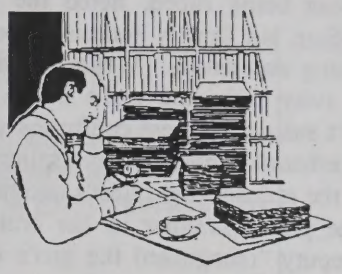
AVC is a local telecommunications firm with which many of the volunteers are affiliated.

PG DABBLES WITH TRUNKED SYSTEM?

Bob Kirk of the Frequency Forum BBS reports that technicians put up an 800 MHz antenna last month on a tower inside the Goddard Space Flight Center. The installers indicated that the new equipment, manufactured by General Electric and others, is for a 10- to 11-channel trunked system for Prince George's County. Further investigation by Detective Frank Carson indicates that the county does not plan to move to the 800 MHz band anytime soon, but intends to use the new equipment for planning and evaluation purposes.

The system will initially consist of two sites, with the second in the county's south end. Frequencies used by the system will probably come from the 866-869 MHz (NPSPAC) band, namely 866.1, 866.1875, 866.2375, 866.6, 866.7875, 867.0875, 868.2375, 868.4625, 868.4875, 868.7625 and 868.9625.

Also make certain to check the national mutual aid channels for activity (866.0125, 866.5125, 867.0125, 867.5125 and 868.0125).



NEWSSCAN

by Brent Baker

DC POLICE HELOS GROUNDED, AGAIN. The DC police department, says the June Rotor & Wing, has once again shut down its helicopter branch because of budget constraints. Members have been reassigned to the harbor branch and other elements. The helicopter branch has three MD-500s, one of which was grounded because the department could not afford the engine overhaul. The department was in the process of acquiring a surplus Army Huey UH-1H.

The federal financial control board might provide funding to jump-start the helicopter branch. Meanwhile emergency air missions are being performed by the Park Police "Eagle" helicopters.

SCANNER + STAFFORD DEPUTY = ARREST, PART I. A Stafford County man and woman were charged with raping a 13-year-old girl "after a deputy sheriff's scanner inadvertently picked up an emotional cellular telephone conversation between the victim and one of the suspects," The Washington Post reported May 19. The woman charged in the case had convinced the victim to go for a ride with her. The man was also in the car, and when they stopped to take a walk, that's when the alleged raped occurred.

A few hours later the girl was walking home after the alleged attack when Deputy Robin Perkins stopped to check on her. The deputy spoke to the girl briefly and then drove her home. The girl said noth-

ing about being raped, noted the Free Lance-Star, but Deputy Perkins suspected something was wrong. When the deputy drove away from the girl's house, the deputy's suspicions were confirmed when she overheard a phone conversation between the girl and the rapist's accomplist on "the police scanner in her cruiser." The deputy "recognized the girl's voice and returned to her house."

SCANNER + STAFFORD DEPUTY = ARREST, PART II. A female Stafford County deputy, reported to once again be Deputy Robin Perkins, arrested a 23-year-old Stafford County man on drug charges in late May after overhearing a cordless telephone call on her police scanner. The deputy was in the Olde Forge area at the time and saw Melvin Thomas Carey II standing outside a townhouse talking on a cordless telephone.

Sheriff Ralph Williams, the Free Lance-Star reported, said the deputy overheard a call in which Carey was asked to deliver marijuana to a customer at a motel. When the call ended, Carey got in his car and drove to the motel. There, the officer stopped him, searched his car and found marijuana and drug paraphernalia.

POLICE LISTENING IN. A North Bend Oregon police officer nailed a couple of thieves after overhearing their CB conversation, a brief Associated Press story reported May 29. Two truckers chatted on their CB radios about how they had just stolen wooden pallets from a store. "Sgt. Kent Sandburg," the AP reported, "was parked on the side of a highway when the trucks drove by and he heard a conversation on channel 10 bleed over onto channel 9." When the two men "talked about whether they should return the pallets, Sandburg broke in and said, 'Maybe you should.'" If you're going to be a criminal it pays to know a little about radio communication and who might be listening!

ALEXANDRIA GETS AUXILIARY POLICE. Alexandria Police Chief Charles E. Samarra announced that the city council approved the establishment of a one-year pilot auxiliary police program. Under the pilot program, the Metro Herald reported, 10 auxiliary police officers would assist police department personnel, both sworn and civilian, to accomplish major work objectives as directed by the chief.

The auxiliary officers would be volunteers, at least 21-years-old, who either reside or work in Alexandria. They would not carry guns, but will have the authority to make arrests. The officers would spend 275 hours in classroom training conducted at the Fairfax County police training facility, training alongside those recruited by Fairfax County. For details call the public information office at 703-838-4636.

TUMOR LAWSUIT DISMISSED. On May 17 a federal judge dismissed a lawsuit brought by a man who claimed on CNN's "Larry King Live" that a portable cellular phone caused his wife's terminal tumor. H. David Reynard, Jr. had brought the suit against four cellular phone companies. A May 20 Washington Post story noted that "researchers who have studied possible connections between cancer and exposure to radio waves of the frequencies used by cellular telephones have found no statistical correlation between the two."

More relevant to this case, the plaintiff was unable to produce any scientific evidence to support his contention. The judge cited an affidavit from a doctor who wrote that "It is my opinion within a reasonable medical probability that she had the brain tumor before she ever used the cellular telephone."

DEFENSE DEPT CONTRACTS CELLULAR SERVICE. In a contract worth more than $1 million, Cellular Business reported, Bell Atlantic Mobile of Silver Spring will provide cellular communication services to the Department of Defense personnel in the Washington area. Currently more than 2,000 DOD employees require cellular phone service in the line of duty. The contract also includes cellular voice privacy service, which reduces the chance of eavesdropping; mobile phone voice mail and direct service, which can link a cellular phone to the user's office phone service, allowing shortened dialing and access to least-cost long-distance routing.

Ken Fowler, Kurt Sokolowski and Tim Tyler contributed to this month's NewsScan.

OTHER SOURCES OF FCC DATA, PART 3

Prior to purchasing FCC data, check with the supplier to determine how much information is provided with each listing. Fields which you consider important, such as call sign, transmit city, licensee address, etc., may or may not be included. Refer to the March and April issues for Parts 1 and 2.

ACTION DATA PROCESSING, INC.

ADP maintains a database of all FCC two-way radio licenses which ADP says is taken directly from FCC files. Listings of all licenses within a state, county or geographic area are available. A disk or printout of licenses for the District sells for $82 (surrounding states are priced higher). Various options are available. Call 301-587-0558 for more information.

COMMUNICATIONS ENGINEERING TECHNOLOGY, INC.

CET provides direct-dial access service to its database for $1.50 per minute using a toll-free connection. CET also sells data on disk and on paper. Data are available

by state (the District sells for $80 on paper and $130 for disk; surrounding states are priced higher). CET also performs custom searches and provides various radio-related engineering services. Call 800-445-0297 and ask for a brochure.

GROVE ENTERPRISES

Grove sells FCC data on CD-ROMs and high-density disks. The CD-ROM covers the entire US and is available with or without mapping support ($170 and $100, respectively). Disks are sold by state for $40 each (add $10 for Calif., Florida or Texas). Included with the CD-ROM or disk is a database search program. For details call Grove Enterprises (800-438-8155) and asked for a copy of the "Grove Catalog & Buyer's Guide."

INTERACTIVE SYSTEMS, INC.

ISI says it is the only FCC-authorized provider of interactive access to the most current FCC licensing data. ISI's FCC databases are updated nightly and are available through direct connection to ISI's Washington-area computer. Prices start at $36 per hour for a 1200-baud connection. For details call 703-812-8270.

US SCANNER PUBLICATIONS

If you don't have a computer or prefer not to fool with data on disks or CD-ROMs, this might be your best alternative. US Scanner Publications produces guides for each state which list most radio services above 30 MHz. Each volume covers one state and costs between $15 and $30, depending upon size. Contact US Scanner publications at 800-890-6999.

HOLLINS RADIO DATA
(Radio Shack)

Hollins Radio Data publishes a volume called Beyond Police Call, edited by Richard Barnett. It is designed as a companion to the various volumes of Police Call. It tries to cover the entire U.S. in one volume and is available at your local Radio Shack.

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Please address all correspondence to Alan. We encourage readers to submit material and write articles which relate to the hobby. All submissions are subject to editing for both style and content. When submitting material please make certain we have your phone number should we have any questions. We welcome frequency and visitor requests, but please include a SASE.

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The Capitol Hill Monitor is the non-profit monthly newsletter of the *Capitol Hill Monitors*. The newsletter keeps scanner enthusiasts abreast of local meetings, frequency profiles, and other topics of interest. Dues are $8 and include 12 issues of the newsletter. Back issues are available for $1 each. Please make checks payable to Alan Henney. Membership will be prorated accordingly in the event of a postage increase.

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Mike Peyton, Maryland Coordinator
703-749-7379
Ken Fowler, Virginia Coordinator
703-385-2165

Frequency Forum Computer Bulletin Board:

We encourage computer users to log onto Jack Anderson's Frequency Forum computer BBS at 703-207-9622 (8-N-1). Frequency Forum is the official electronic gathering place for readers of the Capitol Hill Monitor!

The Capitol Hill Monitor

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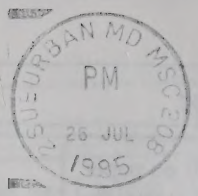

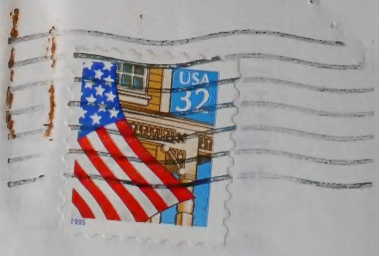

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